N080-630 ERIC REPORT RESUME

ED 010 131 12-29-66 24 (REV)

ORIENTATION, FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS, RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE, DICTION--RHETORIC CURRICULUM I, TEACHER VERSION.

KITZHABER, ALBERT
RQR60230 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, EUGENE

CRP-H-149-2
BR-5-0366-2
- -65
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$1.60 40P.

*CURRICULUM GUIDES, SEVENTH GRADE, *RHETORIC, *GRAMMAR, LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, *TEACHING GUIDES, DICTION, *ENGLISH CURRICULUM WRITING, EUGENE, OREGON, PROJECT ENGLISH, NEW GRAMMAR

THIS REPORT WAS CONCERNED WITH GUIDES FOR A RHETORIC CURRICULUM DESIGNED FOR SEVENTH-GRADE CLASSES. GUIDES FOR THE TEACHER WERE PRESENTED. THE GUIDES CONSISTED OF--(1) AN ORIENTATION UNIT TO MAKE STUDENTS AWARE OF LANGUAGE PURPOSE, (2) A UNIT ON FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS, (3) A UNIT ON THE RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE, AND (4) A UNIT ON DICTION. AN ACCOMPANYING GUIDE WAS ALSO PREPARED FOR STUDENT USE. (ED 010 130). (WN)

ED010131

50366-2
(H-149)

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

ORIENTATION
FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS
RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE
DICTION

Rhetoric Curriculum I
Teacher Version

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education
This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

The project reported herein was supported through the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

ORIENTATION

FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

DICTION

Rhetoric Curriculum I
Teacher Version

The project reported herein was supported through the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

ORIENTATION UNIT

Rhetoric Curriculum I

Teacher Version

Copyright © 1972, 1973 by
The University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon
All Rights Reserved

Teacher Version

INTRODUCTION

In families where language is recognized as a vital ingredient of the social climate, the dictum "Think before you speak" has frequently been a part of the home instruction of the young. The full implication of this statement probably has never been assimilated by anyone at once, and for most people the assimilation becomes a part of growth and learning throughout an entire lifetime.

Nor can the seventh grader, just beginning to examine his language more closely, be expected to absorb in an introductory statement the many aspects of language he will encounter in his secondary school studies. The most he can be expected to do at the outset is to take an interest in the subject and to accept the idea that his own use of language affects his relationship with people around him. The study of American English just completed should have made him feel more comfortable about the language used in his own home and at the same time more ready to accept Standard American English as a convenient medium for communication on a wider scale.

This short introductory unit seeks to make the student aware that language always has a purpose and that his own particular use of language --what he says and how he says it--does have a rhetorical effect. If he can begin to see that purposes--worthy and well-intentioned though they be--may fail because of the misapplication of language to a particular situation, he may be well on the way to understanding what skill in using language can do for him. If he accepts the challenge of language as a way to improve his human relations, the <u>how</u> of his communications will become in his mind an essential part of the <u>what</u> and the <u>why</u>.

For the student who may previously have interpreted the <u>how</u> to mean correct usage only, this viewpoint may reveal a new dimension of communication. Hopefully, he will come to understand that while incorrect usage in a given situation may impede the effectiveness of a statement because of attitudes people take toward usage, it is not the sole consideration in discourse; and that matters of word choice, order, and association of ideas also influence the reader-listener.

In the day-to-day conduct of the classroom the teacher has the opportunity of helping the students grow in their awareness of basic rhetorical principles as applied to communication within the class. The teacher's first concern should be the setting of a classroom climate in which all class members are accepted as people of good will interested in trying to improve their communication skills. From this beginning, the work can expand in such a way that each student may progress at his own pace in speaking and writing, at the same time learning by observation how others are applying language to a number of situations. Class discussions concerning the work in literature and language as well as the discussions implicit in the rhetoric assignments provide a natural means for growth in the application of language to particular situations. Assignments in writing, when completed and read aloud for the class, will offer other opportunities to observe rhetorical principles

in action. And finally the teacher's own careful use of language, especially when offering suggestions for group or individual improvement, can daily serve as a valuable model.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

LESSON 1

Students will probably not find it difficult to list situations in which they have used language for a particular purpose. You may wish to write the students' suggestions on the chalkboard, thus providing a convenient list to which students may refer in carrying out the writing assignment. The following list is indicative of the kind of situations students may suggest.

I HAVE USED LANGUAGE

To get something I want

To apologize for something I've done

To express my anger over an injustice

To make myself feel good by telling what I know that my big brother or sister doesn't

To try to comfort a friend who feels bad about something

To try to get my parents to do something

To convince my teacher that I have studied hard on my lesson

To prove I am right about something

To say thanks for a gift, a helping hand, or a good time

To express an opinion

To call attention to something lovely, ugly, or interesting

To make a report

To contribute my ideas to a discussion group

To provide entertainment for my friends or myself

To find out something I don't know

To keep someone else from knowing how I really feel

To express happiness in_____

To make someone else feel good

To reassure someone

ASSIGNMENT FOR WRITING

The papers should be read in class, and probably all honest contributions should receive some favorable comment. The emphasis in this assignment should be on the students' ideas, not on their writing skill; and the papers should be graded, if at all, on the clarity and liveliness of the presentation. Ideally, perhaps, you should rate each paper as it is read to the class.

LESSON 2

EXERCISE

Though students are probably aware that people often do not succeed in their efforts to use language to carry out their purposes, it may not be possible for all students to think of specific situations where the use of language has created a problem. You may want to give them more examples. Students may enjoy the following classic: A boy returning from a day's absence from school greets his teacher with "Did you do anything in class yesterday?"

Students who can recall situations like these should have an opportunity to share their experiences with the class. It might be well for them to make notes, particularly of the remarks they plan to quote, so that they can make smooth recitations.

LESSON 3 (Optional)

This lesson may be used to reinforce the ideas stressed in Lessons 1 and 2. Before having them turn in their papers, you may want to allow students to read at least one of their observations to the class.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWING LESSON 2

By this time you have probably gauged the ability level of your class group as far as oral response to discussion questions is concerned. The orientation unit in literature, the unit on Varieties of English, and now this introductory rhetoric unit have all asked students to make use of language in class discussions. As the work of the year progresses,

the ability of the students to use language effectively should increase. It might be well at this point to stop to evaluate the progress of the class as far as effective participation in class discussion is concerned. The questions listed below could be used to evaluate the discussion following Lesson 2 of this unit.

How Did We Do?

1. What did we learn from the discussion ?

2. Did everyone who spoke make himself clear to all the other members of the group, or were there some misunderstandings that had to be cleared up?

3. Did everyone seem to be a part of the discussion either by listening carefully of by making comments?

4. How could we have improved this particular discussion?

5. What can we do to improve future class discussions?

The final questions could--again through class discussion with this express purpose in mind--result in a list of criteria for a good group discussion. These criteria could then be used as a means of evaluating the next discussion to be carried on by the class. Because the way in which discussion proceeds throughout the year will have a definite relationship to the students' growth in the effective use of language, some definite suggestions concerning the handling of discussions are included here.

GROUP DISCUSSION IN THE CLASSROOM

The use of group discussion offers a challenge to the teacher who wants to make sure the students obtain important information but at the same time wants to encourage them to develop the ability to find information and solve problems for themselves. The best chance of success lies in thorough preparation, including a plan firm enough to prevent rambling yet flexible enough to permit ideas to develop freely. For each discussion, the teacher must decide upon the purpose: what basic concepts the students should grasp and what specific information they will need in order to arrive at these concepts. By varying methods and procedures the teacher can stimulate student thinking.

Students are ultimately responsible for their own preparation, their attitudes, their willingness to cooperate, and their desire to evaluate and improve discussion. The teacher, however, assumes the responsibilities of any leader of a group: he must plan, initiate, and direct discussion.

Special Techniques for the Teacher

1. The teacher should know the specific purpose of each discussion. For instance, one specific purpose of the discussion of "The Red Pony" (in the Literature Curriculum) is to discover what each of four characters is like. The teacher puts the problem to be solved in the form of a question. In this instance he asks at the beginning of the unit, "As you read, ask yourself: What kind of person is Jody? his father? his mother? Billy Buck?" He thus establishes the purpose of the unit before the students begin their reading. More effective preparation and more effective discussion follow because the student's attention has been directed to a specific problem to be solved.

2. In planning the discussion, the teacher selects questions that will direct students toward accomplishing the specific purpose. The amount of guidance students must have depends on their ability and maturity. Except for advanced students, seventh-graders will probably need guidance both in preparation and in discussion itself. The teacher will need to ask questions which will help them accomplish the purpose. The questions should gradually lead to a solution of the central problem, and must be wisely and carefully phrased. They should be neither too broad nor too narrow for more than a simple "Yes" or "No" answer. For example, in trying to solve the problem, "What kind of person is Jody?" the teacher would be unwise to ask, "Did Jody destroy anything?" The student could immediately answer "Yes," and the question would not lead to an understanding of Jody's character. Questions will stimulate discussion only if they stimulate thinking. The question in the literature unit, "Why do you think Jody smashed the green muskmelon when he knew it 'was a bad thing to do'?" should direct thinking toward the central problem of what kind of person Jody is. Carefully plotted questions can guide the students toward an idea without spoiling their sense of discovery.

3. In directing discussion, the teacher should be flexible. Planning does not mean fixing a pattern of questioning that must be followed without deviation. When the primary concern is to develop critical thinking, the teacher may find it valuable to drop a point or pursue a line of thinking not anticipated in the planning. Student responses indicate when questions need to be delayed or rephrased. The teacher's treatment of student answers and comments can encourage critical thinking so that the group neither dismisses ideas arbitrarily nor accepts them automatically. Furthermore, the teacher can encourage interchange of opinion and information among students and minimize exchanges between himself and a single student. He sets the tone and atmosphere for effective discussion and helps students learn to talk not just to him but to every member of the class.

Although the teacher wants to keep the students on the subject, he also wants a free exchange of ideas. He can help students develop confidence in their ideas by explaining that there is not necessarily one "right" answer. He should see that all students have an opportunity to test their ideas on others without ridicule.

The teacher should encourage all students to take part. A student who rarely participates might be asked for an opinion on a specific point. Later reference to a point made by a diffident student may

encourage him to express his ideas again. The more fluent speakers should not be allowed to carry the discussion. The teacher must guard against taking up the student's thought and finishing it for him, or drawing his conclusion. Discussion is likely to dry up if students are never permitted to finish a sentence. Often they need time to answer questions that require thought. The teacher should not worry about periods of silence during a discussion; students may be reassured if he is willing to wait for them to consider an answer. If students realize that they can contribute their ideas and actively seek solutions to problems, they are more likely to participate. Though the teacher should control the progress and set the limits of the discussion, he should not dominate it.

4. As the discussion progresses, the teacher summarizes ideas that members of the group have agreed upon. Sometimes ideas can be summed up simply in a sentence or two. At other times it is helpful to review the whole line of reasoning that has led to certain conclusions. Students can then see how they have substantiated their ideas or why they have rejected or accepted ideas.

To encourage active participation in group thinking the teacher may ask a student to summarize. The student then has an opportunity to interpret, organize, and present the knowledge he has gained.

At any time during the discussion, summaries can keep students on the subject, clarify and re-emphasize major ideas. For example, in a discussion of "The Red Pony," at various points the teacher can ask a student to summarize the group's ideas about what Jody is like. After they have discussed why he smashed the melon, the summary might show what the discussion has revealed about Jody's character. After the group has discussed another question, "Why did Jody rejoice when Gabilan fought the bridle?" the summary should show what has been revealed about Jody's character and how the new point is related to the preceding discussion. A final summary should draw together the conclusions of the group on each question and the relation of each question to the central problem of the discussion.

5. Evaluation is an important technique for insuring profitable discussion. Each discussion should be evaluated; teacher and students should decide whether they have accomplished the purpose of the discussion. The most effective evaluation should be based on group effort; individual action should be evaluated only for its effect on the operation of the group. A simple technique is to insist on the pronoun "we" instead of "I," "you," "he," or "she." At the same time, the evaluation should reveal the extent to which individuals met their responsibility to the group.

There are several ways to discover whether the purpose was accomplished

1. The student can participate in an oral evaluation of the discussion immediately after it has occurred. The teacher can ask these questions: What did we accomplish? What did we do well? What did we not do well? This kind of evaluation, perhaps coupled with some kind of test over the material, is most likely to lead to improvement. Emphasis must be on the performance of the group.

2. Each student, using the form provided in the student version, can write down what he has learned from the discussion. The teacher should be able to judge the accomplishment of purpose, and if the students have understood the purpose also, this should be a fair evaluation.

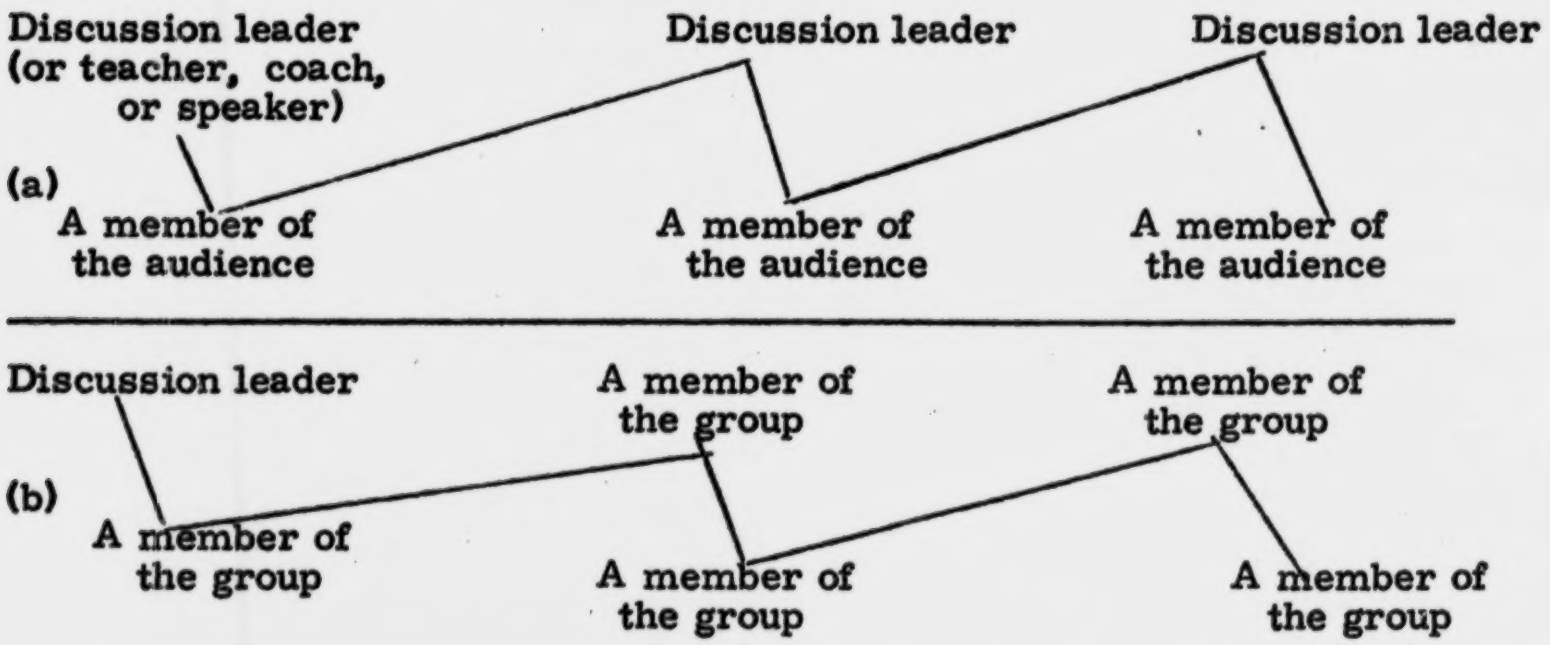
3. The teacher can ask specific questions about the discussion for the student to answer in writing. These questions should cover ideas brought out in the discussion that were not suggested in the plan as well as the original pattern of ideas. The answers should be consistent with the summaries.

4. Evaluation by an outside observer is often revealing, but only if the observer understands clearly the purpose of the discussion.

5. Tape-recording the discussion for evaluation by the group is sometimes a means of stimulating interest, and it allows the group to hear how they operate as a group.

The best evaluation results from the use of criteria worked out by the group itself. Evaluation should be a continuing process, and since the reasons for effective or ineffective discussions change, each discussion must be evaluated somewhat differently.

In making clear to students that group discussion is an interaction among the members of a group and not just a question-and-answer session between the teacher-leader and individual group members, the following pattern may be useful for illustrative purposes:



As the work of the year unfolds, students should be able to grow in their ability to use language more effectively with their fellows. Occasional evaluation of discussions (as time permits and as it may fit into your plans) should be of assistance in building to this end.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

Rhetoric Curriculum

Grade Seven

Teacher Version

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Part I: SO GOOD TO REMEMBER	2
Part II: A NUMBER OF THINGS	5
Part III: ALL IN THE FAMILY	7
Part IV: THE STRANGE AND THE WONDERFUL	10

FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES AND PLAN: LESSONS I-IV

These four lessons attempt to encourage and then to aid the student to find significant and meaningful material in his own experience and to write about it. As teachers of writing we usually need to convince a seventh grader that he can find material in his own experience that is significant to him and worth telling to others, and, for most students, we need to encourage verbal facility rather than discourage it. There will be time later to trim the student's sails, but first there must be sails to be trimmed.

The student is directed toward a purpose for writing and speaking in the belief that if he has a clear purpose in mind, that purpose can lead him to materials in his past experience that he would not have thought of otherwise. But we try, and we hope with some success, to avoid the danger of too obviously prescribing a purpose to the student. We hope the student, so far as possible, will find his own purpose and not settle on it finally until he has searched his experience for what he considers meaningful and significant. But this delicate task of directing while not seeming to direct is difficult to perform in a curriculum and can only be done with real success in the classroom.

Purpose, in the preceding paragraph, does not mean "to persuade an audience to adopt a particular course of action." It means something probably more modest and perhaps more important. It means "to extract what is significant in experience and to effectively convince someone else that it is meaningful and significant." (Of course, what the student considers significant must agree with what his teachers consider significant. That is where the directing comes in.) To be specific, the purposes we expect the student to have in mind in each lesson are (Lesson I) to characterize some aspect of an animal's personality; (Lesson II) to characterize something the student has observed and to reveal his attitude toward it; (Lesson III) to order a simply structured narrative incident so as to suspend the climax and create interest, and to use details to increase the reader's involvement in the narrative and his understanding of it; (Lesson IV) to combine all of these purposes and techniques in a structured narrative fantasy.

Once the student has been encouraged to search for material and has been guided toward a purpose, then the single concern becomes effectiveness. We intend, always, to ask the student the same questions: "How effectively does this passage do what you want it to do?" and "How can the passage be made to fulfill its purpose more effectively?" The diligent and honest search for the effective word and the effective arrangement of words and sentences is perhaps the most important operation in that part of the writing process that can be taught, but how to conduct the

search can only be taught in the classroom, and considerable time will have to be spent discussing examples of effective student writing. This unit is built on these discussions, and it cannot succeed without them.

Finding material, finding a purpose, then effectively fulfilling that purpose--these are the things we wish to help the student to do, and, always, to encourage him rather than inhibit him. Particularly, these lessons attempt to draw a heavy black line between effectiveness and correctness. Effectiveness is determined by purpose and is the result of an honest search for "What I want to say"; correctness is a social prescription that is always relevant to effectiveness, but must be placed lower on any scale of values. In addition, emphasis on correctness for the sake of correctness rather than for the sake of effectiveness--particularly in the seventh grade--will necessarily inhibit the student just at the time when he most needs freedom in order to find material, explore it in search of significance, and express its significance effectively. Consequently, these lessons do not emphasize correctness of paragraph form, sentence form, punctuation, or usage. Only in the classroom can the teacher show the student how correcting formal and mechanical inadequacies increases the effectiveness of writing and speaking, and only the teacher can provide the light touch that will prevent correction and correctness from stifling the seventh grader.

There are four specific writing assignments in the course of four lessons, culminating in the writing of a structured narrative fantasy. Over the course of the year, however, you will undoubtedly wish to make as many as six additional writing and speaking assignments which will reinforce the work done in Lessons I, II, and III. The three lessons should have provided the student with sufficient material for these additional writing assignments. Only the individual teacher, however, when facing a particular class, can know how many writing assignments are necessary to prepare the students to go on to the next lesson in the unit, and only the individual teacher will know when a class is ready for the final writing assignment. It is assumed that the four lessons, including all writing and speaking assignments, will require twenty-five to thirty class periods.

LESSON I: SO GOOD TO REMEMBER

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES AND PLAN:

The basic rhetorical principle involved here is that if a person is going to write, he must have something to express which is first of all significant to him and which, by use of good writing, he can make significant to a potential audience. As a young adult grows in personality and in knowledge he finds himself developing attitudes, opinions, and points of view. The child, on the other hand, still within his family group, is subject to and hampered by certain rules and regulations and forced to accept attitudes, opinions, and points of view. Oftentimes he is not even aware of the resources within himself and within his environment that are worth telling. The teacher then must develop an awareness, on the part of the student, of these resources

The teacher must develop also an awareness that although certain subjects may be of universal interest, attitudes and points of view toward them are the individual's contribution.

In this lesson the student is asked to express his point of view and attitude by choosing details that characterize his impression of an animal. The lesson should lead the student to understand that his impressions are the result of observations, that he can communicate his impressions to others by presenting his readers with the same details of behavior and appearance that give him the impression in the first place.

The contrast between the highly generalized "My Dog" and Thurber's vividly detailed "Snapshot of a Dog" should illustrate to the student the critical role that sharply realized detail plays in characterizing, and also show him the importance of detail in crystalizing and communicating an impression.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. Allow time for the students to read "My Dog," to think about the study questions, and to make notes on the sentences mentioned in questions 1 and 2.

2. Discuss the study questions. The writer is obviously trying to point out what he considers to be the outstanding characteristic of his dog. Discuss his success.

3. Allow the students to discuss pets and animals they have known, in preparation for making notes on the animal. Then allow them to make their notes. Emphasize that the notes are to be used to tell the other students in the class what the animal was or is like.

4. Before having the students read "Snapshot of a Dog," call attention to the following words and be sure the students understand their meaning in the context: brindle, extravagant, nondescript, tranquil, buffeted, freshet, Homeric, malice, integrity, mettle, tenacious, prowess.

5. Contrast the success of the two writers in conveying a vivid impression of the dogs and bring out how Thurber uses detail to make a very explicit statement of Rex's outstanding characteristics.

6. Use the essay as a basis for further discussion of observations the students have made of animals, and particularly the animal they are going to write about.

7. Use the exercises as a basis for a discussion of the importance of narrowing to a single characteristic or a couple of related characteristics and, also, of the importance of development in order to succeed in conveying an impression of the animal's characteristic. Follow the exercises with a discussion of the study questions.

8. The students should now be ready to discuss the essay they will write. Allow as many as possible of the students to talk briefly about their pets. Then ask each student to write a short essay that will let the class know about the outstanding characteristic of his pet or some other animal he has known.

By listing the materials on the board in a plan similar to the one below, you can help the student see the wide range of characteristics an animal may have. For instance, when the students mention their pets, these can be listed on the center board. When the writing of the essay is assigned to the class, you can add the phrases My, Our, My friend's, My Aunt's, Our neighbors', My cousin's, etc. At this point, you can, by referring back to the students' earlier remarks about their animals, by encouraging additional comments, and by adding some suggestions of your own, help the students to come up with the list on the right.

My	dog	loves me
Our	cat	loves everybody
My friend's	parakeet	hates cats
My aunt's	fish	is a faithful friend
Our neighbors'	horse	hates the mailman
	lamb	is lazy
	rabbit	is stupid
	duck	is intelligent
	hamster	is sly
	frog	annoys the neighbors
		never forgets
		embarrasses me
		never gives up
		is a beggar
		is a thief
		is a clown
		digs holes
		is spoiled
		is noisy
		does tricks

LESSON II: A NUMBER OF THINGS

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES AND PLAN

This lesson enlarges the scene of observation and, again, invites the student to look closely at all that he finds about him. Because seventh graders tend to "see" in large abstractions, they tend to write in large, vague generalizations. To attack the writing problem we attack first the perception problem. The poems in the lesson will impress the student with how much life can lie behind the cold word perception. Concurrently, the student is asked to keep a journal of his own observations. How long you will want to continue this journal depends on the situation. It certainly should be continued throughout this lesson, and the material in the journal can be used for further writing assignments.

The lesson next repeats the purpose of the first lesson. It looks closely at the details that the poets have selected in order to discover how the detail succeeds in characterizing the subject. The students are then given further practice in selecting details in order to create the characterization of their subject they wish to convey.

Finally, the lesson breaks new ground by pointing out how the details reveal the poet's attitude toward his subject, that the poet deliberately chose the details he did in order to communicate a particular attitude toward the subject. The student is then asked to examine his own attitudes toward the subject and to select those details that will communicate the attitude he wishes to communicate.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. Before beginning this lesson you may wish to ask the students to begin keeping a journal of observations. Class discussion of these journals is probably the best way to teach students to break down those large, vague percepts which are likely to content them. Probably the students should not be asked to make more than one or two observations a day so that the emphasis can be placed on seeing and hearing details and on finding language that will "catch" the details.

2. Allow the students time to read the selection from Tom Sawyer and to make notes on the study questions.

3. In the course of the discussion of the study questions the following points should be made: (1) The details Twain uses came from his own experience. (2) Twain does make general statements ("there was a delicious sense of repose and peace in the deep pervading calm and silence of the woods" and "the marvel of Nature unfolded itself"), and both the general statements and the details fulfill Twain's purpose, but, if his purpose is to give the reader a vivid

sense of the calm and of the "unfolding" of "Nature," the details are necessary and the general statements are almost optional.

4. If the students have already begun their journals, the "Suggestions for Writing" can be used for further discussion. Exchanging recollections and observations is a good way to help those students who are having difficulty making a journal.

5. The discussion of the Emily Dickinson poem and the haiku should turn attention to the importance of selecting detail, but before the appropriate details can be selected the writer must have a variety of details available to select from. The discussion should also refer back to the experience the students have had selecting characteristic details of an animal's appearance and behavior in the first lesson.

6. The first writing assignment in this lesson is to write a sentence on the model of a haiku. Some students will wish to write more than one of these, others will have done well if they can complete one. You should probably post these, perhaps on 3 x 5 cards on the bulletin board. Some of the better students may wish to experiment with the haiku form or other short verse forms.

7. With "The Pheasant" and "The Meadow Mouse" the lesson turns to how the poet selects particular details in order to convey his attitude toward the subject. The point we hope the student will discover is that instead of simply telling us his attitude, the poet has selected particular details that <u>show</u> or <u>reflect</u> his attitude. The discussion here is crucial because the student must come to understand that there were many other details the poet could have chosen; but because he had a particular attitude toward the subject, he chose those details that his attitude reflected. "Coloring" or "loaded" language are not involved here; they will be covered later in the curriculum. Here is a matter of a particular attitude that leads to perceiving and choosing certain details rather than others.

8. A thorough discussion of the details the students used in their sentences should precede the final writing assignment. The point of the discussion is the effectiveness of the details in characterizing and in revealing attitude. Students should be reminded again that before effective details can be chosen, a variety of details must be available to choose from.

9. This lesson has covered a good deal of ground, and it is more than likely that a single writing assignment will not do the job for most students. But each class is different, and only you can know how many assignments are necessary and how to vary them to keep the students interested.

LESSON III: ALL IN THE FAMILY

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES AND PLAN

The two selections used here have been chosen because of their directness and simplicity and because they are accounts of experiences similar to those which may be found in the students' own lives. Both of the selections deal with a similar situation: receiving a much desired gift. The first purpose in studying the selections is to have the students discover that their own families can be rich sources of subject matter for writing.

In the first two lessons the student's purpose was to characterize an animal or something he had observed. How much development was needed depended upon how much detail was required for effective characterization. In this lesson the student's purpose is enlarged, and consequently he must develop a fuller and more complex form. The purpose now is to write a short narrative which first raises the question "What is going to happen?" and then suspends the answer until what is involved in the happening is explained. The amount of development that will be needed depends on the amount of detail that will be necessary to pose the question "What will happen?" interestingly enough to involve the reader. The whole lesson turns on developing a rather sophisticated sense of what is an adequate development of a suspenseful narrative, and it involves the even more sophisticated rhetorical fact that development that is adequate to one narrative will not be adequate to another. We are in an area in which it is difficult to make general rules, and the teacher must therefore deal with each narrative separately during the class discussions, pointing out what is adequate to it.

This lesson covers a good deal of ground, and when the student turns to the final revision of his narrative, he will have much to keep in mind. The amount of detail any one student will be able to incorporate in his narrative will vary; how much preparation is necessary before the class is ready to tackle the final assignment will have to be determined in the classroom.

We should remember too that at this point it is most important to emphasize noticing and using details, even if, as we must realistically acknowledge, the details some students will come up with are not very relevant to the question "What will happen?" For most students, refinements in form can come later, perhaps several years later, and at the moment we are not so much concerned with turning out polished writers as we are with demonstrating the importance of detail in fulfilling a narrative purpose. All discussion should first aim at helping the student to find details that might be relevant to his purpose, but we cannot slight relevance; having a clear sense of purpose can help the student to find materials, and, even in the seventh grade, the student must be developing a consciousness that the basis of all clear writing and speaking is a well-defined purpose. He too must be developing the kind of judgment that can select or reject according to his purpose.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. The first two sets of study questions are designed primarily to help the student understand what happens in the two narratives and to begin to see that the writers are saying something about people in general as well as telling an interesting story. The latter insight is not followed up in detail in this lesson; instead, the lesson concentrates on creating a narrative structure that will involve the reader's interest because he is led to anticipate an unknown outcome. How Mrs. Forbes and Lincoln Steffens succeed in creating such an anticipation should be an important part of the classroom discussion of these narratives.

2. Before the students make their lists of incidents in family life which they remember vividly, some discussion of memorable times will probably help to stir their memories. The following list includes many of the situations which will probably be mentioned in a class discussion:

Birthdays	A friend moves	Disobeying	Sharing
Christmas	Firsts	Disappointments	Wishes and requests
Lost	In disgrace	Boners	
Money	Fights	Fears	
Report cards	Punishments	Disappointing someone else	

3. After the students have made lists of family incidents they remember, choose some of the more loquacious students to give free-style accounts to the class of incidents of their choosing. These accounts should help other students to think of incidents that have happened to them. While these students are speaking, discuss with the class the possibility of creating suspense in their narratives.

4. With the aid of the preceding discussion, help all of the students to choose an experience that raises the question "What will happen?" and answers it. Then allow the students time to write their narratives. These narratives will be revised after the second set of study questions is discussed.

5. The second set of study questions is designed to lead the student to an understanding of how Mrs. Forbes and Lincoln Steffens created suspense in their narratives. Then there is a series of exercises in which sample paragraphs are revised to create suspense more effectively. Finally, the students are asked to revise their narratives so as to create suspense.

6. During the discussion of this set of study questions, ask some of the students to read their narratives, and discuss how these students might more effectively create suspense.

7. In the discussion of detail the emphasis should be on the importance of the details to the narrative purpose. How well developed each narrative will be will depend on the individual student, but some of the things that should be taken into consideration are: (1) Details of character: What particular role does each character play in determining what will happen, and what details will reveal the characteristics that are appropriate to that particular role? What details should be rejected because, although they are appropriate to other aspects of the person's character, are not appropriate to the role he plays in this incident? (2)Details of scene: Is the scene instrumental in the action? Which aspects of the scene are? Which are not? (3) Details of action: Which details of the action must the reader have in order to understand what might happen and what does happen? Which details may be interesting in themselves but are irrelevant to the expectation that is being created and fulfilled?

8. The discussion of the appropriateness of conversation in a short narrative should first point out how Steffens descends to the concrete at the high point of his narrative in order to increase the dramatic effect. Most students should be able to see that a very short dramatic conversation at the climax of "Tom's Guardian Angel" would also increase the dramatic effect. The discussion should finally lead to the general conclusion that, in these narratives, part of the dramatic effect depends upon the use of conversation.

   Perhaps some practice in writing conversation will be necessary before the students are ready to incorporate brief conversations into their narratives.

9. Allow the students time to revise their narratives.

10. (Optional) At this point it is possible to point out that some incidents are interesting and significant because they are typical and meaningful. There are study questions on the Forbes and Steffens narratives which prepare the way for this point. And some of the more sophisticated students can probably be brought to a sense of how much suspense is appropriate to the significance of a given incident and brought to an understanding that a good deal of suspense in an insignificant action is esthetically and morally questionable. However, if a student has a good comic sense of anticlimax, he certainly shouldn't be discouraged, though he may be aided in understanding how to use it.

    Some students will have noticed that Steffens does not end his narrative with the climax. The note at the end of the assignment will probably lead most of these students to realize that Steffens had a larger purpose in mind than is indicated by this single incident and that consequently he builds bridges from one incident to the next. It might also be pointed out to these students that narrative

has many purposes besides creating the simple kind of suspense that has been the subject of this lesson.

LESSON IV: THE STRANGE AND THE WONDERFUL

RHETORICAL PRINCIPLES AND PLAN

No new rhetorical principles are introduced in this lesson, except perhaps the free play of the imagination in composing as a rhetorical principle. The lesson is designed to allow the student to freewheel as much as possible. It is hoped that he will use detail to characterize and to express his attitudes, and it is particularly hoped that he will succeed in creating a structured narrative that builds suspense and then resolves the suspense. But these formal matters should be treated only in revising, and you should try to create an atmosphere for writing the first draft in which the student feels as free as possible to allow his imagination to find its own way through its own territories.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. As the directions indicate, the quiz should be approached in the spirit of fun. Each child should take the quiz and score his own paper, understanding that no record of individual scores will be kept. If the teacher feels that a closer examination of the papers will be of value, she might collect them. The purpose of the quiz and the discussion of it is to remind the student of his reading in the literature of fantasy. The discussion should range widely enough to give each student a start toward creating a world of fantasy for his own narrative.

Key to the Quiz

1.	n	6.	a	11.	p	16.	j	21.	r
2.	e	7.	f	12.	i	17.	x.	22.	c
3.	t	8.	m	13.	g	18.	q	23.	k
4.	l	9.	y	14.	o	19.	b	24.	d
5.	v	10.	h	15.	w	20.	u	25.	s

2. Each title or character in the quiz should be discussed at least briefly to stir the students' memories of the strange and marvelous happenings in these narratives.

3. When the materials in the quiz have been explored, the students should be encouraged to share their recollections of other literature or fantasy. Their reading of fables and myths will undoubtedly be a valuable source. Try to allow each student to "tell" a story or a part of a story, and try to avoid becoming the "teller" yourself, if you possibly can.

4. Only after all the students have been allowed to do all their "telling" should you make the writing assignment. Refer to the list of suggestions in the student version, but do not refer the students to the checklist for revising until it is time to revise. Those students who prefer to use it immediately, of course, may, but do not let it interfere with the writing process at this point.

5. If a student seems to have trouble in starting to write, you may have to suggest a plot:

   a. A poor boy who is disappointed in his hopes of obtaining a bicycle for Christmas passes a junk yard where a wrecked bicycle starts a conversation with him. With the aid of some magic oil concealed in the rusty handlebars, the bicycle is completely restored; but, more than that, it also sprouts a beautiful pair of wings; The boy is often tardy to school and is doing badly in geography class.

   b. The night after his birthday party, Tom Jones was disturbed in his sleep by a rustling in his closet and then a thump. The thumping continued. Tom went over and opened the door. The basketball that his Aunt Mazie had given him as a birthday present bounced out and began talking. "Thought you'd never open the door," said the basketball. "I want to introduce myself."

   c. The little wizard with the peaked hat appeared on Jane's dish of oatmeal one morning at the breakfast table. "Of course you don't like it," he said. "Oats are for horses. Take me by the hand and off we'll go to a land where you can do whatever you please."

   d. Mary's aunt gave her a little carved wooden box. One day, as Mary was dusting it, she jokingly said, "Open, Sesame." To her surprise the box flew open and a quaint little old lady jumped out. Mary soon discovered that the little old lady could do almost anything by making a wish and snapping her fingers.

6. After the first draft has been written, discuss the problem of revision. Before going through the list of suggestions for revising in the student version, see how many items the class can put on a check-list for revising. Can they come up with points to check that are not on the list in the student version?

7. In an assignment of this kind, students may create extremely long narratives. To polish these long narratives properly may be more of a task than some students should attempt. The narratives, however, should be shared and should serve to give each student some practice in speaking and writing. The following suggestions are offered to insure some sharing and to reduce the writing load:

   a. Permit the student to tell only one episode from his narrative, prefacing it with a reading of whatever brief summary of the narrative is necessary.

   b. Reverse the above procedure, having the student give the summary as a talk and the incident as a reading.

   c. Have the student revise only one or two episodes and copy them neatly in ink.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

Rhetoric Curriculum I

Teacher Version

RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

The grammar of the sentence systematically describes the great variety of English sentences; the rhetoric of the sentence is concerned with choosing the form of a sentence that will fit a particular purpose.

In order to find the sentence that will do the job he wants to do, the student must have available a variety of possible ways of saying approximately the same thing, and he must also understand that the sentence that first pops into his mind any occasion is only a first try. It is usually possible to find a sentence that comes closer to what he wanted to say and that does a better job of linking what he has already said to what he will say next. The best possible first try, of course, is what we aim at, both as writers and as teachers, because most of the writing process, whether it is good writing or bad, is rapid and almost automatic, but good first tries are the result of training and of a habitual consciousness that first tries can always, or almost always, be improved.

Improvement, finding the more effective structure in the given case, depends upon a sense of the kind of structure that is appropriate to the moment. Prose, like mustic, is successive in structure; whether we are reading or writing, we move successively from one moment to the next, and the sentence is only one kind of discernible unit that exists within the continum. Consequently, to treat the sentence as a self-contained unit is to distort its rhetorical function--is, in fact, to misunderstand its nature. It is therefore wise to approach every sentence in the light of its context. The choice of one structure rather than another is always made according to how the particular link must be shaped in order to fit into the ornate chain of discourse. But the choice is not made in terms of grammatical structure; it is made in terms of meaning, and although it is probably possible for people to learn to write without ever thinking about the relationship between meaning and structure, the writer who does think consciously and critically about how variations and shades of meaning affect the structure of his sentences possesses an important tool for both writing and thinking.

These lessons on the rhetoric of the sentence try to help the student become aware of how sentences can be shaped and joined to fulfill his purposes. Ezra Pound's analogy between writing and making a table is relevant here: "It doesn't matter which leg of your table you make first, so long as the table has four legs and will stand up solidly when you have finished it." Any piece of writing fits together much as a table fits together. Rhetoric is the study of what makes it stand up. But if the student is to understand what makes his table stand up, he must treat revising as a natural part of writing. When we have written something down, that is the place to start thinking, not the place to stop. One of the advantages of writing something down is that it puts the idea on a sheet of paper where it is easier to take a cool and detached look at it. A further advantage is that our idea has been made public, and we are coerced into considering it as other people would.

The lessons in the "rhetoric of the sentence" are linked to the lessons in the grammar curriculum. Each lesson presupposes that the student understands the relevant part of the grammar of the sentence. Forming tenses of verbs, for instance, is a grammatical problem; which tense to choose in a given situation is the rhetorical problem that follows it.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. Allow the students time to read the introductory statement carefully. Then discuss it with them to make sure that they have understood it. Stress particularly that revising should be a natural and automatic part of writing and that they already have at their command the materials they need to improve their sentences; they only need to put themselves in the frame of mind to look for them. As they progress in the lessons, they should begin to see that the structure of the sentence cannot be considered separately from its context.

2. The first step in these lessons is to present a semantic description of a sentence that parallels the grammatical description, S---> NP + VP. When we say that all sentences name a subject in the NP and say something about the subject in the VP, we are speaking theoretically; actual sentences do not always fit the form NP + VP. The formulation is offered as an informal way of approaching the question, "How does a sentence mean what it means?" but it is not offered as the beginning of a formal system of semantic analysis. We are not going to ask later questions like "What kernel statements and what semantic transformations underlie a sentence like 'Who?'"

3. Exercise I leads the student to think of writing a sentence as the process of naming something and saying something about what he named. Thinking about a sentence in these terms should help him to choose an accurate and appropriate name and to think through and clearly express what it is he wants to say about what he named.

4. Exercise II goes on to the problem of choosing a word to name what the subject is about. What that word should be involves matters that are emphasized in the diction units of this curriculum, but "diction" and "rhetoric of the sentence," of course, overlap. This exercise emphasizes choosing the word that will help to clarify the continuity of the design.

The terms subject kernel NP and subject need some explanation. It is probably wise, so far as possible, to keep semantic and grammatical terminology consistent with each other. The student is already familiar with the terminology of transformational grammar; hence the phrase, subject kernel NP, to name the single word in the kernel NP that designates the subject of the sentence. The subject kernel NP will later be differentiated from the object kernel NP. The phrase is ugly enough and awkward enough that, for esthetic reasons alone, it should be shortened to the traditional word, subject. And the word subject is ambiguous, as it is in traditional grammar; it refers both to the

referent and to the word that names the referent. But which meaning is intended should be obvious in context.

5. The student theme in Exercise II exploits the simple structural device: they, some, others: it designates a subject and divides it into two parts. A great deal might be said about this simple device. In the first place, as a device for organizing the paragraph, it has the great merits of simplicity and clarity, and simplicity and clarity or organization are points that need to be stressed again and again. Even the most complex organization must be built on a simple and easily understood framework. Also the paragraph makes it obvious that choosing subjects for sentences is involved in organizing. But some of the better students will notice that, in this paragraph, simplicity and clarity of organization are coupled with an almost simple-mindedly limited varity of sentence structure. It can probably be demonstrated to these students that the same clear plan of organization can be preserved, or one equally clear and simple substituted, without hitting the reader over the head with its simplicity. Exercise 5 will show how Thurber overlays a simple structure with complextiy.

6. Before the students begin or while they are doing Exercise III, it will probably be wise to further demonstrate and discuss the relationship between sentence subjects and organization. Sample student papers can be used. In discussing these papers you can pull out the subject of each sentence and put it on the board and then discuss the appropriateness of each subject and of the order in which they are arranged to the purpose of the paper. This quickly gets beyond the problem of sentences as sentences, but it does demonstrate that the sentence cannot be considered except as a part of a larger context, that the subject of a sentence is a part of the organization of the whole.

7. The point in Exercise IV is that clear organization is a good deal more complicated than merely naming the subject of a paragraph in each sentence of the paragraph. The subject of Thurber's paragraphs is Rex's fight, but this does not mean that each sentence in the two paragraphs has the subject Rex or Rex's fight. Although we cannot expect eighth graders to handle paragraphs of the complexity of Thurber's, some students will be dissatisfied with the simplicity of organization of the student paragraph about the Beatle fans. Other students will be doing well if they can organize things as well as the Beatle commentator did.

8. Exercise V gets to the heart of the problem of using sentence structure to build and clarify continuity. And the task of sufficiently preparing the reader for the subject of the sentence that is to come next is never mastered even by the best writer--there is always a new sentence coming next. And, of course, sufficient preparation depends on the purpose of the piece of writing; it depends upon how how much the audience knows about the subject already; it depends upon how deeply the writer wants to go into the subject, and, above all, it depends upon how deeply his knowledge will permit him to go. But although we cannot teach a rule that will insure mastery, we can give the student an awareness that every word he uses as the subject of a sentence must be used with sufficient preparation

that the audience will understand how it is related to his larger subject--how the motorman is related to Rex's fight and to Rex's personality. Furthermore, as teachers, we have the more important job of helping the student to become aware of how well qualified he is to use the word.

In this exercise the student is shown that using a noun intelligibly is similar to making the reference of pronouns clear. Both lead back to the point we must constantly stress: that discourse is successive; that what comes next is prepared for by what came before.

9. The first part of Exercise VI can be used as a basis for class discussion, and the second part need not be written assignment; it can be used for further discussion of the practical application of what has been learned in Exercise V and in the first part of this exercise. But some students will be able to answer the questions in the second part on their own in writing, and they should be encouraged to do so because this is the sort of thing that as writers they must learn to do; other students should be able to answer the questions in writing if they are given some help; still others will probably benefit most from discussion alone.

Not all of the questions in the first part have simple answers. After all, all questions in rhetoric are relative.

a. This is debatable. A more sophisticated writer might have used hill as the subject, or, more likely, would have combined the first two sentences into one. These are matters we as teachers cannot legislate. Our job is to point out the possible choices and to point out the consequences of any choice.

b. The student was possibly, in an awkward way, trying for immediacy, or, more likely, he was simply thoughtless.

c. No, we are not surprised by it, but a student might have very good reasons for wanting to change it.

e. No, we are not surprised. The transition from the house to the wind and rain follows an association the writer could expect any reader to make.

g. What does the it refer to? Certainly the writer didn't know.

h. Again an open question. The whole paragraph needs drastic revision, and where these sentences should go depends on the revision.

10. The rhetoric of tense in the seventh grade--choosing the tense appropriate to the job--is limited to tense in narrative and descriptive writing. Exercise VII is concerned with something that is really a matter of usage rather than of rhetoric: the choice of a tense to narrate an event that occurred in the past. More formal usage requires the past tense for events that occurred in the past, but

students often use the present in an attempt to achieve a sense of immediacy. Their problem is to achieve immediacy within the social prescription that past events be told in the past tense.

11. Exercise VIII points out the use of the present tense for narrating events that occur at no particular place in time. This is usually the tense of directions for assembling the cut-outs on cereal boxes. This student has successfully used the present tense, combined with the pronoun you, to achieve a sense of immediacy and participation. There is not the serious social prescription against this variety of the present tense that there is against the variety that depicts past events. But opportunities for using it are more limited than are opportunities for using the simple past.

The students are then asked to decide upon a tense for the paper about the Beatle fans. They must first decide whether they wish to treat the antics of the girls as a separate incident that occurred in the past or as representative actions of representative girls. They should also notice that adopting a consistent tense affects the choice of subjects.

12. In the model in Exercise IX the student writer used the present tense to deal with actions that occur habitually in a span of time that includes the immediate present--the most common use of the simple present tense in English.

13. Exercise X points out the use of be + ing for narrating events that take place in the immediate present. It also points out that change of tense can be used as a structural device in arranging material that isn't necessarily narrative. You can point out to the student that this writer's movement from habitual actions to events that are occurring in the present gives a sense of movement and immediacy to his description.

14. Exercise XI points out the difference in meaning that arises when the modal will moves from the present tense to the past. The students should have some thoughts on whether beginning in the habitual present, moving to the immediate present and finally to the future was an effective device.

15. The same discretion should be used with Exercise XII as was used with Exercise VI. The students who can work on it independently will benefit from doing so.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

DICTION

Rhetoric Curriculum I

Teacher Version

Copyright © 1966 by
The University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon
All Rights Reserved

DICTION UNIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXERCISE 1: "Use words which are appropriated for the occasion."
(Malapropisms as an introduction to word choice)

EXERCISE 2: "The nice boy uses nice words"
(Exactness and variety in word choice)

EXERCISE 3: "The gang engages in a blast for impecunious students"
(Choice of words: audience and occasion)

EXERCISE 4: "Wheels on the dolly stick to a plate"
(Same words in different contexts have different meanings)

EXERCISE 5: "Run, run, run, run, or run."
(Same words in different contexts have different meanings)

EXERCISE 6: "The young boy, the big snake, and the big lion"
(Choice of words: Vividness and exactness in description)

EXERCISE 7: "An air mass can be just a mass of air"
(Choice of words: effectiveness in oral language)

EXERCISE 8: "Will you take this guy to be your husband?"
(Slang expressions and appropriateness)

Introduction

This unit on diction is a collection of exercises which deal with various aspects of word choice as indicated by the table of contents. It is intended that you select materials from this unit as they seem most appropriate. Since the basic concepts of word choice: audience, occasion, purpose, idea, and attitude have been introduced in the Orientation Unit, these exercises can probably be best approached as re-enforcements of these concepts.

Each student must learn to make effective word choices. Since words that are appropriate in some situations are not appropriate in others, words cannot be labeled arbitrarily as "good" or "bad." However, the student should be reminded that some words are more formal than others and some more precise than others, and that in writing and speaking, word meaning is affected by the total context.

This unit on diction is directly related not only to the Orientation Unit, but to every unit in the curriculum. In almost every unit, the student will be examining the meanings and relationships of words. In the General Orientation Unit to Literature (Seventh Grade), abstract and concrete words are emphasized in "Bishop Hatto" for contrast between things that we can touch and things that we can sense. The effectiveness of word choice in creating mood and atmosphere is pointed out in the units on The Short Story, Part One: "The Tell-Tale Heart" (Poe), Part 2, "Rip Van Winkle" (Irving), and Part 3, "The Red Pony" (Steinbeck). In the same unit, words like "water" are given a more precise meaning by the addition of words like "drowsy" and "glassy." In "Snapshot of a Dog" (Thurber), a discussion is included on words that can or cannot be eliminated to produce effective writing. In "Mama and the Graduation Present," examples are used to indicate how an author uses words that enable a reader to see and hear a character.

This unit should help students to think further about the importance of the right word in the right place. Students who become aware of the kinds of word choices they can make and why these choices are made have taken an important step toward more effective writing and speaking.

Suggestions for Teaching

Exercise 1: "Use words which are appropriated for the occasion"

Malapropisms provide humorous examples of using words in the wrong places. Because a study of malapropisms sees to be highly motivational, it has been placed first among these exercises. Students can go over the list individually and then the class can correct the sentences and perhaps suggest other examples. In particular, students should become aware that "rightness" and "wrongness" are not intrinsic qualities of words but are determined entirely by the uses to which words are put.

The questions in the student version might well be used to establish the understanding and appreciation needed for the business of choosing words for effective expression--the right word, at the right time, in the right place.

Exercise 2: "The nice boy uses nice words"

The purpose of this exercise is to give students practice in choosing words that convey the exact meaning intended by the speaker or writer. The exercise asks students to make substitutions for the overused word "nice." For example, "nice day" could be "beautiful," "cloudy," or "warm day;" "nice breeze" could be "pleasant," "refreshing," or "cooling breeze;" "nice old lady" could become "friendliest," "gentlest," or "kindest old lady;" "the park that was nicer" could become "lovelier," "prettier," or "shadier;" etc.

The original paragraphs of the students, described in their assignment for writing, may or may not be exchanged and discussed in the class, depending largely on the level of students.

Exercise 3: "The gang engages in a blast for impecunious students"

Additional examples of the principle in this exercise can be brought out by class discussion. Students can discuss which word choices would be more appropriate for each of the three audiences: parents, a student from another school, readers of a paper issued by the School Board (including principals, teachers, and many different parents).

Plans for a Party

Our (gathering, gang, group, mob, seventh-grade class, contemporaries, colleagues) will (have, put on, sponsor, engage in, participate in) a (bash, blast, rumble, dance, blow-out, party, planned social activity, stomp, doings, entertainment, function) next Friday. (We'll, We will) have dancing to (discs, platters, records, recordings) and games in the gym. Parents and teachers will (chaperone, keep an eagle eye on activities, assist). The type of (dress, duds, clothing, costume, wearing apparel) which will be (appropriate, seemly, fit, O.K.) is (dressy dresses, formal attire, party dresses) for the girls and (sport coats, formal attire, good clothes) for the boys. There will be (a banquet, a feast, a feed, eats, grub, a meal, refreshments), (an abundance, plenty, a great deal, heaps, loads, lots) of cookies and punch. The whole thing is free, so that all students can come, even if they are (impecunious, broke, financially embarrassed, not flush, without funds).

(Emphasize that there is no single "right" answer. Discuss WHY choices are made.)

To parents

Parents might not know exactly which "gathering" or "group" is meant. "Seventh-grade class" is the best choice to convey the exact information to the parents. "Contemporaries" and "colleagues" would be too formal, "gang" and "mob" too informal. The last two words would suggest unpleasant associations. "Have" is the most common choice here, and "We'll" is the informal, conversational tone appropriate for talking to parents. If parents understand the meaning of "discs" or "platters," either could be used. Otherwise, the choice would be "records." Either "chaperone" or "supervise" suggests to parents that the students may safely be allowed to go to the party, which the really the idea students want to put across. "Clothing" is a good choice. In talking to parents, "O. K." might be used. Either "dressy dresses" or "party dresses" (depending on which term parents usually use) would be appropriate. The same applies to "sport coats" or "good clothes." "Refreshments" is probably the best choice and either "plenty" or "lots" of cookies and punch. Students would probably use "broke" or perhaps "without funds." "Impecunious" would be too formal.

To a student from another school

Informal word choices are appropriate. Use words that students normally use in talking to other students. They may want to substitute their own word choices. For this audience, the students themselves are the authorities. "Gang" and "mob" probably won't give the right impression. "Group" is probably the best choice. "Obviously "sponsor" and "engage in" are too formal. "Put on" or "have" will probably be their choice. They might use "blast," "blow-out," "rumble," "stomp," or a word not on the list. "Dance" or "party" would, of course, be appropriate. They use the informal "we'll." They would probably not use "records" or "recordings" but either "discs" or "platters." They would want to underplay the supervision of parents and teachers in talking to another student. They might use "be there to see what's going on" or they might eliminate this information entirely. "Wearing apparel" is certainly too formal. They might choose "dress" or "clothing." Probably "O. K." would be their choice. "Appropriate" and "seemly" are too formal. They may want to substitute another current term for "dressy dresses" or "party dresses," or either might be used. "Formal attire" would be too pretentious. The same is true of the recommended "boy's clothing." "Sport coats" or "good clothes" could be selected or another terms like "white shirts and ties." They could choose "feast," "feed," "eats," or "refreshments"; "heaps," "loads," or "lots," of cookies and punch; they might use "financially embarrassed" or "not flush" or "without funds" as euphemism to avoid direct reference to a student's lack of money.

To readers of a paper issued by the school board (including principals, teachers, and many different parents:

This audience and situation require more formal language than either of the other two audiences. However, the language should still not be overly formal. "Colleagues" and "contemporaries" sound affected. "Seventh-grade class" would probably be the best choice here as it was in talking to individual parents. "Sponsor" is likely the best choice and perhaps "planned social activity" or "party." The contraction "we'll" would be colloquial in this formal announcement. "Records," "chaperone," and "supervise" are standard choices. "Clothing," "party dresses," and "good clothes" would probably be the most appropriate. "Refreshments," "plenty of," and "without funds" are probably the best choices.

The teacher should point out that some words are appropriate in either formal writing or informal conversation (seventh-grade class, party, records, chaperone, supervise, dress, clothing, and refreshments, for example).

Exercise 4: "Wheels on the dolly stick to a plate"

Students are provided with examples of the principle that certain words mean different things to different audiences. The students are asked to add their own examples. This could be done in either written or oral form.

Exercise 5: "Run, run, run, run, or run."

To show students that words have different meanings depending on context, the word "run" is used as an example. There are 832 possible ways to use "run." Some of these are: "run a business," "run out of money," "run out on a friend," "run down town," "run up to a friend's house," "run across an answer," "run over a margin," "run over a pedestrian," "run down a pedestrian," "run down an answer," "have a run-in with a friend," "run away," etc.

Students can scan a dictionary and look for other words that have a long list of meanings and bring their lists to class for discussion.

Exercise 6: "The young boy, the big snake, and the big lion"

This is Hawthorne's version:

> Then Hercules sat down on the grass, and told them the story of his life, or as much of it as he could remember, from the day when he was first cradled in a warrior's (1) brazen shield. While he lay there, two (2) immense serpents came (3) gliding over the floor, and opened their (4) hideous jaws to (5) devour him; and he, a baby of a few months old, had (6) gripped one of the (7) fierce snakes in each of his little (8) fists,, and strangled them to death. When he was but a (9) stripling, he had killed a (10) huge lion, almost as big as the one whose (11) vast and (12) shaggy hide he now wore upon his shoulders.

EXERCISE 7: "An air mass can be just a mass of air"

In oral reports the language must be simple enough to be immediately understood. The teacher can emphasize this idea by reading the following excerpt from an encyclopedia article on weather:

> (See passage from "Weather Forecasting", Encyclopedia Americana, 1963 edition, Vol. XXVIII, p. 538, starting "Weather forecasting in the short range..." and ending "...is at about 18,000 feet.")

Ask the students if they had trouble understanding the passage and why. The teacher can point out that weather reports on radio and television are often difficult to understand for the average person who doesn't know such words as precipitation, high or low pressure areas, and cold front. Technical terms which might not be understood by the audience should be avoided if possible. If no other choice is available, the term should be explained before it is used.

Discuss the passage on weather in the student version. Rewrite the passage on the board, substituting simpler words suggested by the students.

The students are asked to write short, individual paragraphs that they might include in a report. They will then read these paragraphs in class so that the class can discuss appropriate word choice for an oral report.

NOTE: For an advanced class, you could suggest how word choice would be affected if the class had just studied the subject with which the report deals. For instance, if the class had been studying geography, more technical terms could be used in a report on that subject to them. This would furnish an illustration of how an audience's familiarity with a technical vocabulary would determine word choice.

EXERCISE 8: "Will you take this guy to be your husband?"

This activity concentrates on how words change their meaning, and it includes examples of archaic and obsolete words. Words are included in the student version because different schools use different dictionaries. You can add additional examples for the students to find in the dictionaries that you have available. You can refer to "Snapshot of a Dog," by Thurber, for a model.

NOTE: It is not expected that the student will encounter more complex dictionary work than that suggested here. More extensive treatment of the dictionary is found at the eighth-grade level.